

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Living out the gospel with
one another in our homes

Community Group Discussion Questions

8 Jan 2023

Message by Will Massaro

Questions by John Brewer

This week things didn't go as originally planned. No one expected that Ted would be hospitalized and require back surgery. But God wasn't surprised. He empowered his Church to gather and worship him through fellowship, singing, and the faithful teaching of his word.

Please continue to be in prayer for the Rastatters as Ted has surgery this week and begins the recovery process. As a testament to how much he loves the Church and is dedicated to sound teaching, the afternoon before he was scheduled for surgery, he was messaging the elders about a preaching plan for the next few weeks.

As we look forward to studying through the book of Daniel, Will preached on James Chapter 1 through the lens of living as exiles. As Will pointed out, the book of James was one of the first books of the New Testament written, not long after Jesus' resurrection. In Chapter 1, James tells believers to prepare to have their faith tested, to be doers of the word, and he reminds them that God is Faithful.

Main Point: We can faithfully live out our exile by preparing for the testing of our faith and by being doers of the word, but only because God alone is faithful.

Questions:

1. James describes how we increase in steadfastness. Why do we need increased steadfastness?
2. Read Mark 9:14-29 and James 1:5-8. What does it mean to live without doubting? Why is this critical? Where does our faith come from? What is wisdom and how do we get it? Proverbs 9:10 (and context) is helpful here.
3. Verses 9-11 give a warning to the rich man. Are we rich? As we consider ourselves as exiles living in figurative modern Babylon, is this warning important to us?

4. Ref James 1:12-18. Where is our temptation from and what is its end? What is the solution?
5. A quote often attributed to St. Francis of Assisi goes something like “Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words.” However, there is little evidence to prove that he actually said this, and it seems to contradict his approach to evangelism. What do Psalm 1 and James 1 say about hearing and obeying God’s word? Is it more important that I know what the Bible says or do what the Bible instructs?
6. James says the believer should “Bridle his tongue.” Why is this warning so pervasive in scripture? Reference Colossians 4:6, Ephesians 4:29, and Matthew 15:11. How do we do this? Reference: Psalm 141:3, Psalm 119:171-173. What is “unwholesome talk?”
7. In verse 26 James gives a negative example of “religion” but then provides an example of “Religion” that is pure and undefiled. What do we as the church do with this word?

Reflection: It seems that God is convicting His church to be dedicated to scripture and prayer. Let’s ask God to help us to adore these things, not just do them mechanically. What does the Bible tell us the results are of being ever increasingly immersed in prayer and scripture?